

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 7, 8 and 15 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 2 is amended to incorporate allowable claim 16 therein, and claim 16 is canceled.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments:

(a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendment merely incorporates an allowable claim into an independent claim); (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection, in particular the Patent Office's reliance for the first time on Example 22 of EP 966. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1, 7 and 15 have been allowed, and that claim 16 contained allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, claim 2 has been amended to incorporate claim 16 therein. Thus, claim 2, as well as claim 8 dependent therefrom, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over EP 0 852 966. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

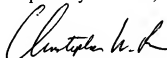
Specifically, claim 2 has been amended to include allowable claim 16 therein. As such, this rejection is now moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2, 7, 8 and 15 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: May 15, 2006

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